

Chapter 6

N B C R e c o n i n t h e R e a r A r e a

Corps-level NBC recon units are mainly employed in rear areas along high-speed priority routes of resupply and at critical points to check reports of contamination. NBC recon units play a significant role in keeping main supply routes (MSRs) open by locating, marking, and finding bypasses around contaminated areas to ensure continuous support of combat operations.

Because of the vast areas normally involved in rear operations, the employment of NBC recon units here differs from that in combat area operations. M93 NBCRS-equipped units are normally employed in the squad organization, because of their high detection and identification rates. M113/HMMWV-equipped units are normally employed by squad organization. Lower detection and identification rates require more vehicles to accomplish the same task. Crew fatigue in the M113/HMMWV-equipped units must be considered, since lack of a collective protection system forces them to operate in MOPP4 during recon missions.

In the rear areas, NBC recon units are employed to allow the supported commander to retain freedom of maneuver. NBC recon efforts are again focused by the IPB and the R&S plan. NBC recon elements can be positioned throughout the rear to conduct NBC surveillance missions. MSRs and other vital routes in the rear area can be monitored for contamination by conducting periodic patrols along the routes.

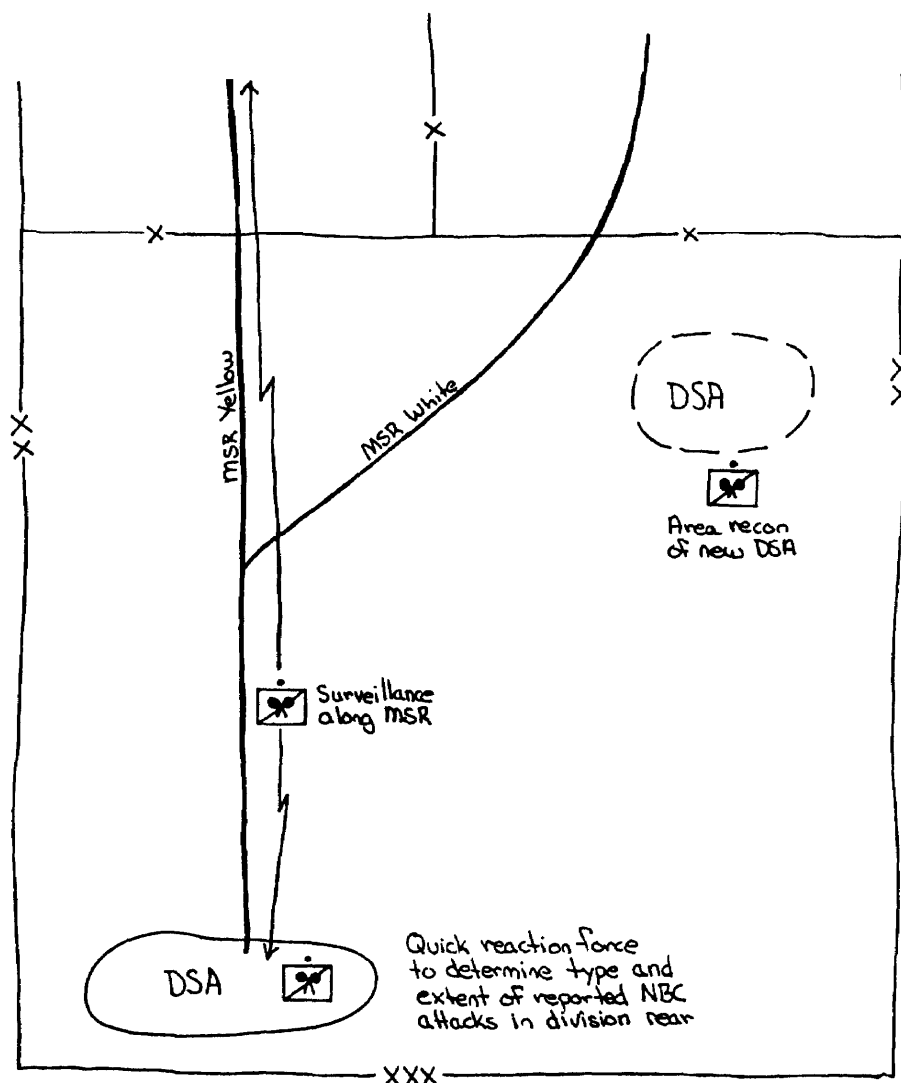


Figure 6-7. Example of NBC recon units supporting rear area operations.

In the corps and TA rear areas, NBC recon units conduct NBC recon operations along MSR routes and at critical points. They also respond to reports of NBC attacks to determine the type and extent of contamination. NBC recon units also may be assigned NBC surveillance missions to observe designated areas for NBC attacks. Areas to be occupied by logistic and C² facilities can be checked for NBC hazards prior to their occupation.

NBC recon units can perform conventional recon missions when NBC warfare has not been initiated. When NBC warfare has been initiated, the employment of NBC recon units in conventional recon roles must be approved by supported commanders. M93 NBCRS-equipped

elements also can be used to identify unknown chemical compounds found throughout the battlefield.

NBC recon units also support area damage control operations. Rear area operations centers (RAOCs) develop and coordinate missions for NBC recon units in the communications zone (COMMZ). The NBCC associated with the RAOC commits NBC recon assets based on priorities that the Theater Army Command (TAACOM) and Area Support Groups (ASGs) establish. After the enemy has attacked the COMMZ with a weapon of mass destruction, NBC recon units provide support to the affected bases and base clusters. NBC recon units providing support in the COMMZ must expect to operate with other services and the host nation.

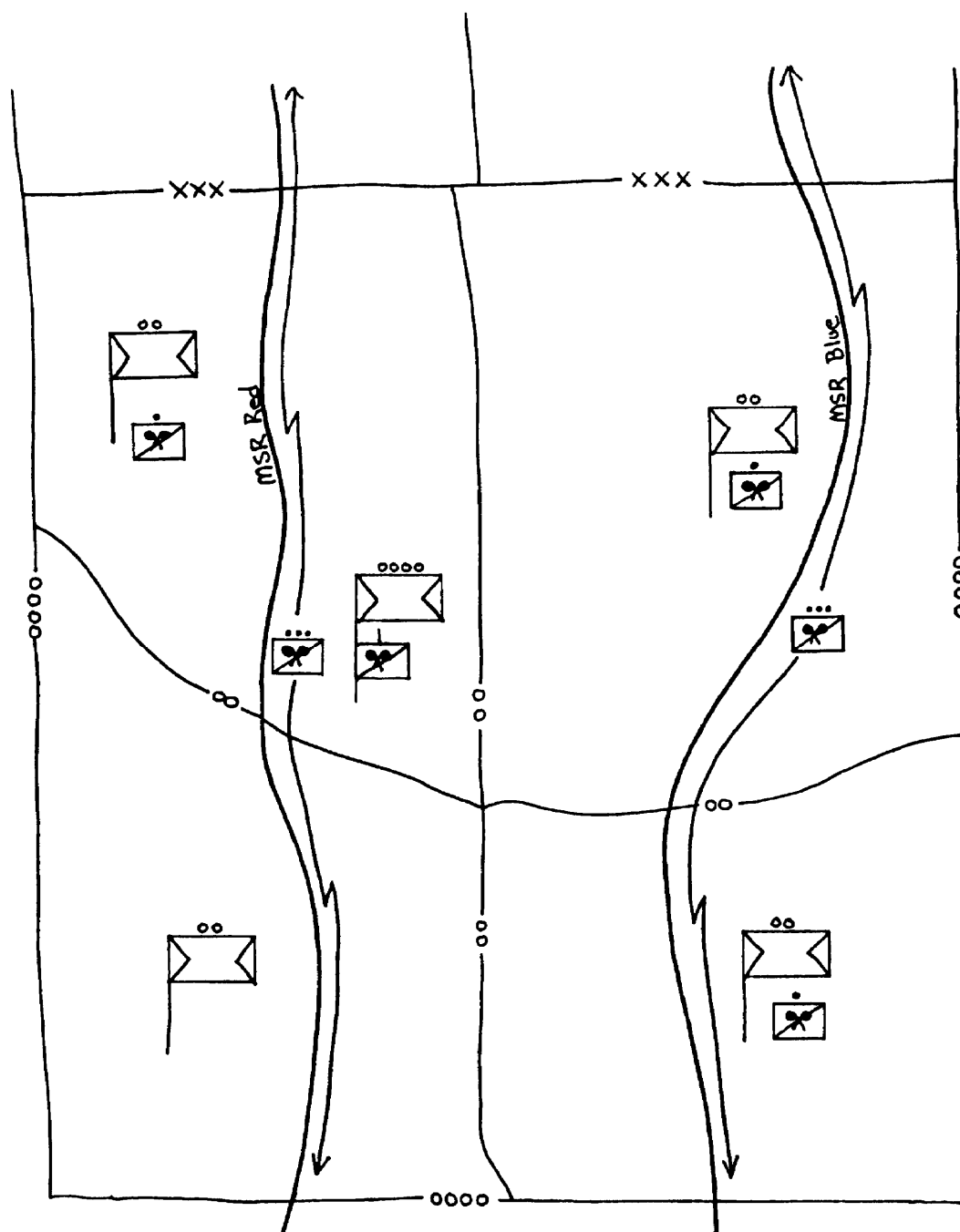


Figure 6-2. NBC reconnaissance operations in the corps TAACOM rear area.